

NSA review completed

16 July 1973

I. B. Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies
North Vietnam

5. Logistic activity within North Vietnam continues at the same moderately high levels observed in the past several weeks. Cargo movements in the Vinh area again centered on the transfer of ammunition between units subordinate to the major logistic entity there. On 4 July, 12-15 vehicles were detected transporting various types of ammunition, including 122-mm rockets, to an unlocated storage facility, and on 10 July nearly 18 tons of small arms ammunition were observed in transit between two logistic entities.

6. Besides observed shuttling of cargo around Vinh, the flow of supplies from a logistic unit northwest of Vinh to another south of Quang Khe in the southern Panhandle has continued during recent weeks. As of 4 July, some 1,600 tons of weapons and ammunition were observed moving between these two units, and on 10 July this traffic comprised 41 vehicles transporting 90 tons of dried foodstuffs.

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7. Additionally, the movement of vehicles through the area between Quang Khe and the DMZ is still being observed, although at lower levels than those seen in recent weeks. On 4 July, 25 southbound and 21 northbound vehicles crossed the Troc River at a ferry southwest of Quang Khe.

Northern Laos

8. Evidence of construction activity in northern Laos -- most of it apparently military related -- became available during the week. A new spur road extending for 2 miles north of Route 7 (the major route crossing the northern Plaine des Jarres) has been built [redacted] and connects the route with a probable billeting and storage area containing 18 buildings. There were also two possible military-related installations detected near Khang Khay: one had 12 probable barracks with 18 associated buildings, and the second had 27 buildings in the early stages of construction.

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9. Recently received evidence detailed Communist logistic activity on Route 7 during late June. On 29 June, there were five 130-mm field guns and two 122-mm howitzers parked in traveling mode in a parking area along the route southwest of Ban Ban.

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Southern Laos/Cambodia

10. The general level of detected Communist logistic activity in the Laos Panhandle remains quite low, but there is scattered evidence that some cargoes are still being moved there. Information received on 6 July disclosed that a division-level logistic entity in the central Panhandle had dispatched nearly 600 tons of rice over an unspecified period. Some vehicle activity is still in evidence, although the rate remains quite low. On the night of 6 July, 70 vehicles were detected on the major roads from Muong Nong south to the tri-border area (primarily Routes 99, 92, 96 and 96/110). Other reports indicate that NVA storage facilities in the Panhandle still have considerable stockpiles on hand. A report of 7 July indicated over 7,000 tons of unidentified cargo in storage at a facility in the tri-border area, and on 8 July a group of sites along Route 99 south of Muong Nong had at least 120 tons of supplies on hand.

South Vietnam

11. Although evidence from South Vietnam was sparse during the week, available indications continue to point to heavy logistic activity there. 103 cargo vehicles were observed on Route 9 between the Laos/South Vietnam border and the junction with Route 6088 on 6 July, and a

report from the previous day showed 160 cargo trucks active between unspecified locations in northern Quang Tri Province. An NVA logistic unit operating on the Route 14 complex in western South Vietnam was reported on 9 July to have shipped nearly 7,500 tons of rice over an unspecified period and as of 11 July one of the major NVA storage facilities on Route 548 north of A Shau had about 8,000 tons of cargo on hand, 75% of it rice.

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III. Other Developments Affecting Communist Military Capabilities

Tropical Storm Anita Impinges on Logistic Operations

Communications intercepts from along coastal North and South Vietnam and the central Laos Panhandle indicate that recent tropical storm Anita has seriously retarded logistic operations and has precipitated emergency procedures. Anita reached the Vietnam coast near Danang late on 7 July, sweeping up the Tonkin Gulf and dissipating inland over Thanh Hoa on the following day. Those units hit hardest have been Binh Trams 12 in Quang Tri Province and 26 south of Quang Khe, although the effects were apparently felt as far north as Thanh Hoa Province. COMINT has referred to impassable roads; damaged bridges, ferries, and fords; and the emergency evacuation of cargo from storage areas to save it from destruction. As of 9 July, the 41st Engineer Regiment located on Route 548 in western South Vietnam had embarked on a "construction offensive" aimed at repairing the damage done by the rains.

Communists Continue to Emphasize Local Supply Procurement in South Vietnam

There is growing evidence that to promote increased procurement of supplies in South Vietnam the Communists have ordered many of their combat forces to become self-sufficient in food and other non-military goods. For example, COMINT reflects that on 2 July elements of the NVA 711th Division in southern MR-1 were advised that the "military region" had ordered that division subordinates would not be issued rice in future. In the B-3 Front, a high-ranking North Vietnamese officer reportedly emphasized recently that "the important mission confronting units of the B-3 Front was food production". Moreover, in the COSVN region [] difficulties in obtaining rice from Cambodia led COSVN in mid-April to direct its subordinate rear service groups to develop rice sources within South Vietnam and to begin supplying food to main force units only. At the same time COSVN reportedly instructed province and district level units to become self-sufficient in foodstuffs.

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Although in past months increasing amounts of supplies have reportedly been purchased in South Vietnam by the Communists, their self-sufficiency campaign has not been entirely successful. In MR-3, a former member of a VC

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battalion has reported that his unit was unable to resupply itself while operating in Binh Duong Province, and had to be supplied from Cambodia.

Communist Logistic Support for Civilians

Some of the recent logistic activity in northern South Vietnam appears related to Communist efforts to establish civilian settlements along the new western supply corridor. Photography [] revealed that seven villages containing a total of more than 100 huts had been erected in the A Shau Valley since mid-May. South of the A Shau, a recent rallier has reported that North Vietnam is providing construction materials for the "economic development and resettlement of North Vietnamese and South Vietnamese personnel" in and around the town of Ben Giang at the junction of Routes 614 and 14 in western Quang Nam Province. Reportedly, the new residents will continue receiving food supplies for about six months, and thereafter are expected to be self-sufficient.

Communist resettlement aid is also reportedly being extended to civilians in both the highlands and northern coastal areas of MR-2. In the B-3 Front, []

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[] VC elements there were receiving daily shipments of farming equipment, including plows, tools, generators, water pumps, and

rice-processing machines. Additionally, the VC reportedly had received bulldozers in early June which were being used to clear roads and farmland. This clearing activity in Darlac Province has been confirmed by aerial reconnaissance. In coastal Binh Dinh Province, Communist cadre were reportedly instructed in late June to prepare a large number of "reception stations" which are to be used to house civilian farmers who "have volunteered to come from North Vietnam to cultivate the land and set up production areas".

I. Infiltration and Redeployments of North Vietnamese Personnel and Military Supplies

A. Personnel Infiltration and Redeployments

1. Two new regular combat infiltration groups were detected entering the pipeline in North Vietnam during the reporting period. Both groups, with an aggregate strength of more than 1,300 personnel, are destined for combat units in the coastal area of southern MR 1 and coastal MR 2. Because of major inconsistencies in group designators, however, it is not clear that large-scale infiltration has resumed.

2. In addition to the regular combat groups, eight small groups composed of an estimated 125 civilian and military specialists were detected in southern Laos, and Cambodia. Since the effective date of the Paris Communique (15 June), more than 2,800 North Vietnamese personnel have started south. Of these, about 2,300 are combat personnel and more than 500 are civilian and military specialists. The cumulative total of southward-moving infiltrators since the 27 January cease-fire date now stands at more than 53,000 personnel. Of these, some 25,000 were in the infiltration pipeline traveling southward as of that date, while over 28,000 have started south since then. (Annex II, for U.S. Eyes Only, contains a

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more detailed discussion of the evidence pertaining to infiltration which was received during the reporting period.)

3. The 88th Regiment of the NVA 308B Infantry Division may be returning from north Laos to North Vietnam. In late June and early July the regiment was identified near the North Vietnamese border, east of its former area of operations in the Plaine des Jarres area. If the unit does return home, it would be the first combat unit known to leave northern Laos this rainy season. It should be noted that the 88th Regiment's sister regiment -- the 102nd -- returned to North Vietnam from southern Laos in late May-early June. These regiments had originally deployed into Laos in December 1972 and January 1973, respectively. We cannot yet determine whether the 88th and 102nd Regiments will return to their former area of operations at the onset of the dry season, but combat units have routinely rotated out of Laos in previous wet seasons.

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Annex B

Post-Cease-fire Infiltration of North
Vietnamese Personnel to the South

1. On 12 and 15 July respectively two regular infiltration groups -- 1042 and 1085 -- with some 650 men each, were initially detected entering the system at Binh Tram 18 in North Vietnam. The designators of both of these groups, however, do not follow the previously established pattern of numerical sequence within the lxxx (VC MR 5) series. The last group detected in the lxxx series was Group 1005, which was observed in southern Laos in mid-February. It seems likely that these groups are anomalies within the current numbering system, but if the designators are valid, their appearance could mean that the lxxx series has been reconfigured and large numbers of combat personnel have infiltrated to the south undetected. It also is possible that Groups 1042 and 1085 are a corruption for Groups 1012 and 1015, which also would result in significant gap-fills. Pending further clarification, however, these groups will be accepted as reported and no allowance will be made as yet for gap-filling undetected groups.

2. Eight special-purpose groups, comprised of about 125 civilian and military personnel also were noted in

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the pipeline in southern Laos and Cambodia since 6 July.
Tables 1 and 2, below, show infiltration starts from North
Vietnam since 1 September and 1 January, respectively.

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Table 1

Regular Infiltration Starts From North Vietnam

1 Sep 71-30 Jun 72	136,000	1 Sep 72-30 Jun 73	94,000
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<u>Destination</u>	<u>1-15 July 1972</u>	<u>1-15 July 1973</u>
Total	6,000	1,300
MR Tri-Thien-Hue	5,000	0
MR 5	0	1,300
B-3 Front	1,000	0
COSVN	0	0
Southern Laos/MR 559	0	0

Table 2

Number of Personnel Entering the Pipeline
Since 1 January 1973

	<u>Total</u> ¹	<u>Special-Purpose</u>
January	20,500	1,600
February	10,200	2,100
March	3,250	2,250
April	1,925	1,200
May	7,175	300
1-15 June	825	325
16-22 June	425	175
23-27 June	450	200
30- 6 July	600	100
7-13 July	725	75
14-15 July	650	0

1. Including gap-filled groups, except Groups 7001-7009 and 5057. Assuming that these groups departed after 1 January, about 5,000 combat troops would be added to the infiltration starts shown above.

2. Including those groups which were initially detected without a specific strength but which have been assigned an average strength of 35.

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